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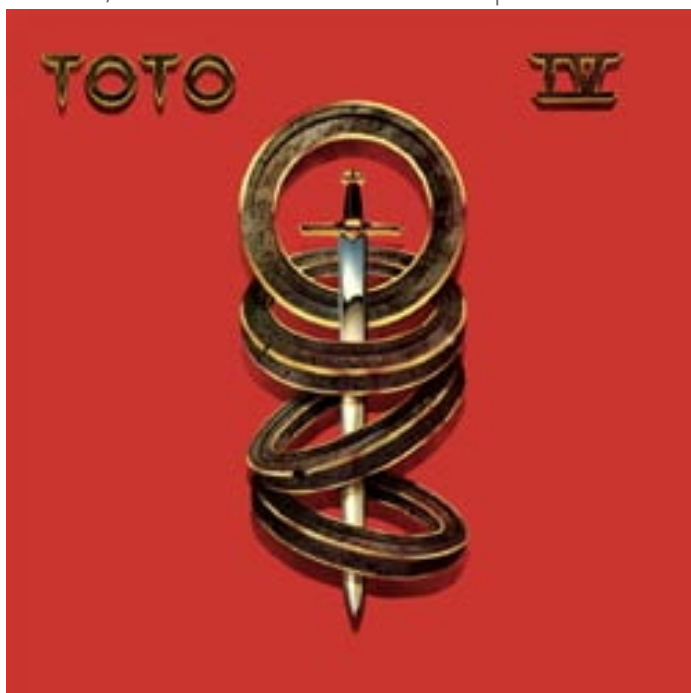
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Toto IV – Stereo Vinyl – Speakers Corner

by Audiophile Audition | Dec 12, 2022 | Jazz CD Reviews, SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews | 0 comments



Speakers Corner Records releases a stellar vinyl re-mastering of a quintessential 80's album.

Toto IV – Columbia Records (1982)/Speakers Corner Records FC 37728 (2022) 180-gram stereo



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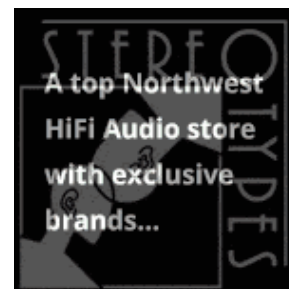
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(Steve Lukather – guitars, vocals; David Paich – piano, keyboards, orchestral arrangements vocals; Jeff Porcaro – drums, percussion, Steve Porcaro – keyboards, vocals; Bobby Kimball – vocals; David Hungate – bass; Jimmy Pankow – trombone; Lenny Castro – percussion; Tom Scott – tenor saxophone; Jim Horn – tenor saxophone; Timothy B. Schmit – vocals; James Newton Howard – string, orchestral arrangements; Joe Porcaro – xylophone; Ralph Deck – synthesizers; Jon Smith – saxophone; Terry Hay – trumpet; Gary Grant – trumpet; Tom Kelly – vocals; Mike Porcaro – cello)

In 1977, a group of Los Angeles studio musicians decided to form a rock band. David Paich (keyboards), Jeff Porcaro (drums) and Steve Lukather (guitars) were session players for various groups like Steely Dan and Box Scaggs. The group added Steve Porcaro (keyboards), David Hungate (bass) and Bobby Kimball (vocals). This would be the classic Toto lineup and their self-titled debut (in 1978) produced a hit single with “Hold The Line”. The highly polished sound of this group was in contrast to the jagged edge of *punk* and *new wave*. A hybrid of hard rock, blues jazz and funk was captured by state-of-the-art equipment and mixing. After two subsequent albums that garnered decent sales (*Hydra*, *Turn Back*) the career momentum stalled. They reconvened for a fourth attempt to put their marker down on the rock scene. The rest was history. *Toto IV* was an enormous success, garnering six *Grammys* (including *Album Of The Year* and *Record Of The Year*) and four singles including the mega hits, “Rosanna” and “Africa”.



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Speakers Corner Records has released a re-mastered 180-gram vinyl of *Toto IV*. All of the meticulous studio engineering and lavish production are front and center. Side A opens with the memorable tune, "Rosanna". With drummer Porcaro's jazzy *half-shuffle* anchoring the arrangement, lead vocals are provided by Lukather and Kimball with a key change (G major to F Major). Solos include jagged guitar (Lukather), swirling keyboards (S. Porcaro), bluesy piano (Paich) and a horn chorus. "Make Believe" kicks off with a blaring saxophone and funky piano. Kimball's tenor is prototypical of the emerging 80's sound. There is a catchy "call and response" in the chorus. Switching to 80's pop-ballad mode, "I Won't Hold You Back" features Lukather's lead vocals, guitar, and lush orchestral (James Newton Howard, David Paich and Marty Paich) and string (Howard again) arrangements. Reverting back to rock, Bobby Kimball sings lead on "Good For You". There are dense synthesizers, tracked vocals and a hard-charging drum/percussion. Steve Porcaro handles the lead vocals on "It's A Feeling" which fits into Toto studio aesthetics.

Side Two kicks off with a harder edge ("Afraid Of love") as Lukather shines on vocals and guitar. The grittiness is not overwhelmed by the expanded arrangement. Paich kicks things off with a jazzy piano intro to "Lovers In The Night". There is a timely rhythmic exchange with the full ensemble and Lukather's guitar is crisp and rocks out. The strings and orchestra act as a counterpoint to the hard rock vibe of this song. More "classic" Toto can be found on "We Made It" with Kimball's high-register delivery, streamlined

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Nov 28, 2022

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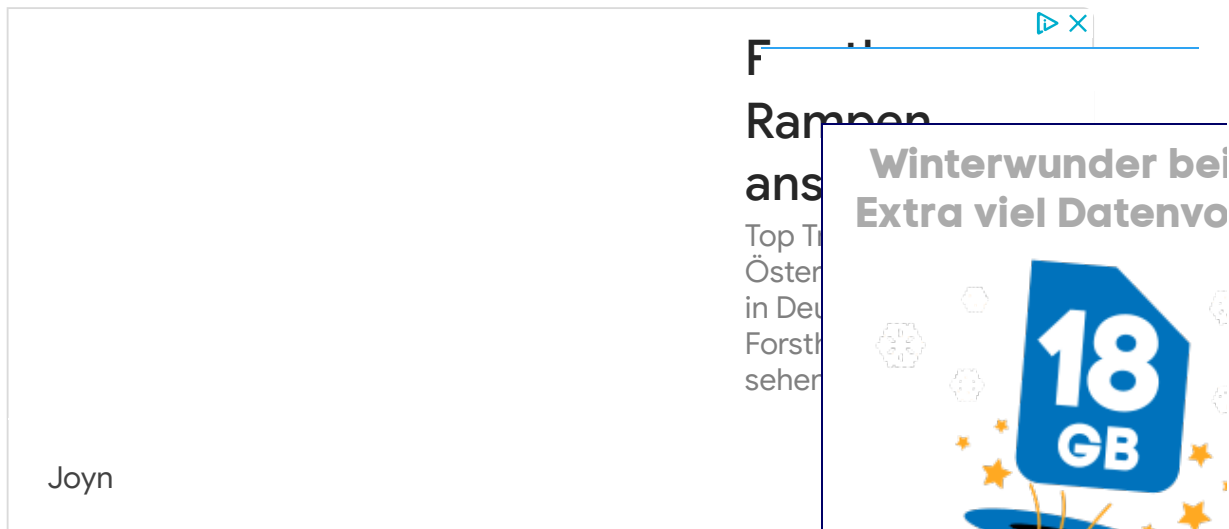
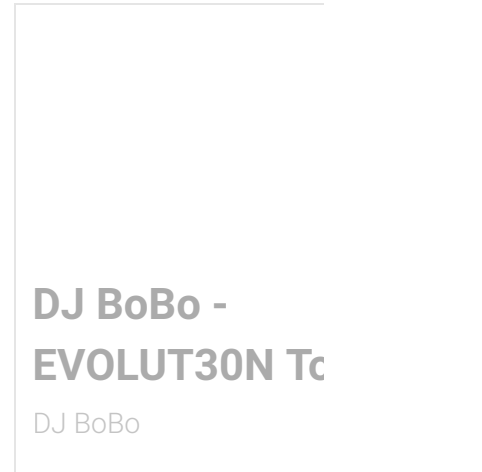
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instrumental translation. A repetitive pop-infused chorus is framed by a basic rock structure. There may be no song more associated with Toto at the height of their popularity than “Africa”. This David Paich composition was the the only single by the band to ascend to the top spot on *Billboard 100*. The fuller sound (“brassy” C-80 synthesizers) is intermingled with an exotic melody and African travel narrative context. Also, the vocal transition from Paich (verse) to Kimball (chorus) is effective. Joe Porcaro’s marimba adds texture. Unlike many rock songs, “Africa” has sustained its relevance, especially in popular culture.



Speakers Corner Records has done its customary excellent job in re-mastering *Toto IV* to 180-gram vinyl. The sound mix is dynamic and reflects the complexity of original technology (3 separate 24-track recorders and a computerized SMPTE timecode system). Forty years later, this album sounds great!

TrackList:

Side One: Rosanna; Make Believe; I Won't Hold You Back; Good For You; It's A Feeling

Side Two: Afraid Of Love; Lovers In The Night; We Made It; Waiting For Your Love; Africa

—Robbie Gerson

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**Janis Joplin – I
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Again Mama! –
Speakers Corner
Records**

**Nina Simone
Sings The Blues –
Speakers Corner
Records**

Dec 5, 2022

A great vinyl upgrade of a jazz icon’s blues